



Solidarity Ukraine –issue 48- Number 2 – Second breath

IN THIS ISSUE

Number 2

*Secondary/side effects in
Russia*

The second man in Ukraine

Second breath in Europe

Useful contacts

The Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering (iriv) joins the international solidarity in favor of Ukraine attacked by Russia on February 24, 2022. The Covid pandemic has weakened democratic countries. Conspiracy theories and hate speech have exploded. This war in Europe is existential for the European Union. This Newsletter is the 2nd published in 2026 and the 48th since the beginning of the conflict. February, second month of the year sadly celebrates four years of war (2022-2026). The year started harder than the previous one with a series of major destabilizations. Number 2 is associated with the adjective “second”, like Second World War, the second child (cadet) who comes after the elder, to the return of elements or situations signals for new start not to repeat past mistakes. Russia lost two major

allies – after Syria in 2024, Venezuela. Ukraine began the year in a «state of the afterglow» faced with the procrastination of its European partners and the concern caused by the United States and a threatening “second man”. Europe attacks the year by remembering its past, January 27 reminds of the moral collapse that was the Second World War. The Nazi hatred was directed against specific communities (European Jews, Roma and Sinti). The Nazi regime persecuted these communities by using resentments inherited from the past (antisemitic hatred, racism, xenophobia...), terrorizing European societies and fragmenting them, to better manipulate them and prevent them from reacting, out of intense fear, cowardice or opportunism. The weapons of totalitarianism do not change - contamination of brains, slow poison of hatred, speech criminalizing and dehumanizing certain communities. The European Union must find a second breath to avoid a worrying return of the past.

- 1- Number 2
- 2- Secondary/ side effects in Russia
- 3- The shadow of the second man in Ukraine
- 4- Second breath in Europe

* logo designed by Caritas Canada in February 2022

Number 2- second

For the Christian dogma, the number “two” evokes "the hypostatic union of the identity of Jesus Christ" (1). In the Bible, number 2 represents man, characterized by duality, an inner division, a consequence of sin. From this angle, one can solve some Gospel riddles. In Jericho, according to the evangelist Mark, only one blind man, named Bartimaeus, is healed; according to Matthew, there were two blind men. The two evangelists tell the truth. Mark gives us the historical version of the facts, Matthew resorts to the symbolic number. (2). The adjective « second » is demeaning. We talk about «second knives», or playing the «second role», when one has not managed to get the heads of the posters. There is an implicit hierarchy. The right of inheritance was ruthless, the other children existed only to play possible substitutes (if the elders called to inherit died). This uncomfortable position as a cadet is still the rule in European royal families, bitterly denounced by Prince Harry of Windsor in an autobiographical work (3).

In chemistry, a binary compound is a chemical one combining two elements - two atoms or two molecules. We speak of a binary approach in an unnuanced, Manichean explanation - all black or all white, while there is a whole shed of grey. Traditional Chinese culture, inspired by Confucianism, deviates from the Western individualistic paradigm according to Li Liu (4). «Its constitutive principle is represented by the idea of a harmonious relationship of interdependence.». The cosmology of Yin and Yang, "originally used to explain the birth of the universe in Taoism, constitutes the metaphysical basis of Confucianism." Yin and Yang are considered "as the two forces governing the universe. The Yang represents virility, power, heat, light, dryness and hardness, while the Yin embodies femininity, passivity, cold, darkness, humidity and softness. Everything in the world contains Yin and Yang and achieves harmony by balancing these two forces. In accordance with this cosmology of Yin and Yang, Confucianism advocates a harmonious society and seeks balance in social relations (Hwang 1999).

US President Donald Trump’s second term is worse than his first for many analysts. This time, he had time to develop a plan, helped by a team of ideologues who reject the legacy of the Second World War, multilateralism and defense of democracy. Since 1945, international organizations (UN) have provided a legal and multilateral basis for a new architecture of relations between countries, many of which were to gain independence through their struggles for decolonization. In Europe, the construction of Europe is a project of reconciliation that was also made by stages after the war, from 6 pioneer countries in 1957 to 27 members in 2026. Yet at the beginning of this year 2026, international chaos makes one consider the worst. The «Second World War» would not ultimately be the last. Everything is possible and conceivable with a series of bellicose signals and men looking for trouble..

Secondary/side effects in Russia

The year 2026 did not start under the best auspices for President Vladimir V. Putin after the American operation conducted against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro. Moscow was destabilized by the American show of force (5). For the associate researcher at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna, Kirill Rogov, American president used the favorite weapons of the Russian president, intimidation and the effect of surprise. The Kremlin and the nationalist Russian elites, violently encouraging war, were impressed by the US' coup. Another disappointment, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro was a leading partner of Vladimir V. Putin according to Peter Rough, director of the Center for Europe and Eurasia at the Hudson Institute (5). He had attended the celebrations in Moscow on May 9, 2025, recovering a 'Soviet victory' from the Second World War. Russian air defenses installed around Caracas and the strategic partnership agreements signed between the two countries were useless in the face of American firepower. Third point of concern, an economic one, for Russia, the capture of Venezuelan oil revenues and the predictable fall in prices (with a supply that has become too abundant) could lead to a fall in oil revenues in Russia, which is already experiencing a drastic drop in oil revenue since the international sanctions. Its "clients" (India or China) have taken advantage of this argument to impose low prices on it.

Another secondary or side effect concerns Iran, another privileged partner of Russia, a main supplier of drones for Moscow in the war against Ukraine. The American president threatened the mullahs' regime to be the next country on his list. But so far, he has not carried out his threats even after the bloody repression of the Guardians of the Revolution against his own population after the demonstrations of the Iranians on Thursday 8 and Friday 9 January, officially causing 3000 deaths, in fact nearly 35,000 deaths according to NGOs on the spot. The Revolutionary Guards have been placed on the list of terrorist organizations by the EU (6). Moscow also did not react after the boarding of two oil vessels protected by Russia in the Caribbean Sea and in the North Atlantic on January 7, a few hours after the discussions in Paris of the member countries of the coalition of volunteers with the Ukrainian president.

The end of January is therefore mixed for Russian diplomats who were pleased to see the Europeans once again ignored by their American counterparts at the Davos Summit or in President Trump's contested initiative for a "Peace Council" perceived as competing with the UN. But the speech of Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carby delivered in Davos on 20 January courageously marked a "break" with the often soothing words of European leaders: "The powerful have their power. But we also have something: the ability to stop pretending, to call reality by its name, to strengthen our position at home and to act together. (7)

The shadow of the second man in Ukraine

The year began as every year with a summit meeting, the Economic Forum in Davos (19-23 January 2026), in Switzerland, at the heart of Europe without being a member of the European Union. Heads of government, multinational companies and international organizations exchange views to take stock of the past year and consider future directions. Prestigious guests are expected to attract the attention of the media and make people speak differently from an exclusive club often characterized by a “small world” closed on itself. The 2026 edition of the Davos Economic Forum was marked by a contempt displayed by US President Donald Trump towards Europe. His intervention on Tuesday, January 20 was only the logical continuation of a series of attacks against its Western allies that occurred throughout the year 2025. President Trump was very well assisted by zealous collaborators, at the forefront of which was the «second man», Vice-President JD Vance, very eager to play the first role.

The willingness displayed by President Trump to annex Greenland created maximum tension before the Davos Forum (8). Donald Trump explained to the American newspaper the «New York Times» on January 8th of 2026 that he needed this autonomous Arctic territory «because it is what I feel as psychologically necessary for success». For Ukraine, this "Greenlandic diversion" had a double negative effect. The first is that Russia has rejoiced in the American plan to annex the Arctic territory (9). Sergei Lavrov, head of the Russian diplomacy, hastened to draw a parallel with Crimea, the Ukrainian peninsula annexed by Russia in 2014. «Crimea is just as important for the security of Russia as Greenland is for the United States» he declared on Tuesday, January the 20th, the same day as Donald Trump’s speech in Davos. This was understood as an echo to the offensive remarks of the American president against the European Union, by flouting the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of an autonomous territory, closely linked to Denmark, member of the European Union and the Atlantic Alliance. This questioning of NATO was another blow to the Europeans, and to the transatlantic relationship since a member country is supposed to come to protect, not attack, its colleagues. Russia did not fail to recall the colonial past of Denmark - Greenland is a legacy, a usual attack against 'colonial' Europe to attract the sympathies of the 'Global South'. The second major negative effect of this Greenlandic adventure is that the media spotlight abundantly commented on this diversion, by highlighting a European front unit not so robust with ambiguous statements such as Italian Prime Minister Georgia Meloni or German chancellor who both echoed the explanations of the American team when they justified sending their soldiers to Greenland in the face of a supposed Russian or Chinese threat..

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky drew bitter conclusions from this European ambiguity when delivering his speech in Davos on Thursday, January 22nd (10). He estimated that the Russian president «Putin has managed to stop Europe» which is «fragmented» and seems singularly «lost». He criticized "the lack of political will" in the face of the imperatives of international justice and especially the reluctance of Europeans who do not defend enough the original values of European construction.

Second breath in Europe

Europeans often gave the impression of falling from the clouds, of seeking a second breath. When the Russian president spoke at the Munich Security Conference in 2007, another annual meeting of Western leaders, he did not mince words in announcing his bellicose program - to regain the ground lost by the USSR since its collapse in 1991. Russia did not intend to 'play a second role'. Vice President JD Vance was just as clear in his speech in February 2025, also in Munich, attacking European values in the same way, and supporting anti-European extremist parties, considered as "secondary" for democracies but maybe called to play the leading role in defending a supposed "Christian and white Western civilization". The two men have one thing in common - their family histories do not connect them to a Western "elite" that gives lessons and is contemptuous towards the popular classes. Two worlds confront each other with a lot of resentment.

Two documentaries broadcast on France television recalled the reasons for personal and very real anger, in which more and more American and European citizens recognize themselves, and which is weaponized by populist movements. A first documentary "The Russian threat" (11) focused on the humiliation felt by Vladimir V. Putin, then an obscure KGB officer stationed in Dresden (Eastern Germany) when the USSR collapsed, leading to an unprecedented economic crisis in Russia of which he was the first victim, unemployed and having to start from scratch in Saint Petersburg with a dependent family. His attitude towards the Russian oligarchs, whom he first "put to sleep" before spoliating or eliminating them, is not explained otherwise- a desire for social revenge. Another documentary "J.D. Vance, the revenge of an America" (12) recalls the journey of a young American born in Ohio, land violently affected by deindustrialization. The economic crisis put his father unemployed and led to his mother's addiction. Coming from a modest background, the only way to pursue studies for this intelligent and courageous young man was to join the army. He served in Iraq, returning to the United States with a hatred of external operations decided by elites who do not send their children to fight, according to Vance. That's true for two Republican presidents- George Bush Jr. or Donald Trump, who both escaped the Vietnam War. A prestigious course at Yale University allowed JD Vance to meet his wife, coming from a privileged background, and a billionaire Peter Thiel, who will support him, and made his fortune. One must not overlook the humiliation of two men, Vladimir V. Putin and JD Vance to understand their bellicose projects.

If the Europeans do not realize the gap that has increased between citizens, many of whom no longer recognize themselves or are unaware of the European model, designed by a deemed and contemptuous elite, the warnings of Volodymyr Zelenski in Davos may come true. Becoming a secondary power worldwide, is not an issue. Suffering the Russian hegemony or the Make America Great Again (MAGA) willing to 'evangelize' the Europeans are the greatest threats to the European Union in February 2026. Let's wake up, "Make Europe Great Again" in the EU way not the MAGA way - *Slava Ukraini* !-

- (1) Relano, F. (2003). Cosmographia Arithmetica: le monde, ses parties et la numérogie médiévale. Le Moyen Age, Tome CIX(1), 113-127. <https://doi.org/10.3917/rma.091.0113>.
- (2) Jérôme Martineau, « Quel sens donner aux chiffres dans la Bible ? »- téléchargé le 28/01/2026 http://www.interbible.org/interBible/ecritures/symboles/2008/sym_080307b.html
- (3) Prince Harry de Windsor « Spare », Press Pocket, 2023.
- (4) Liu, L. (2007). Le yin et le yang dans la communication Typologie et logique de la persuasion en chine. Diogène, 217(1), 150-165. <https://doi.org/10.3917/dio.217.0150>.
- (5) Claire Gatinois et Benjamin Quénelle, « Un événement à double tranchant pour Vladimir Poutine » », Le Monde, 6 janvier 2026
- (6) European decision of the 29th of January 2026- https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2026/01/29/iran-l-union-europeenne-sanctionne-plusieurs-hauts-responsables-dont-le-ministre-de-l-interieur_6664621_3210.html
- (7) Speech delivered by Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney at the Davos Forum in January 2026- <https://globalnews.ca/news/11620877/carney-davos-wef-speech-transcript/>
- (8) Claire Gatinois et Philippe Ricrd, « A Davos, la relation transatlantique en berne », Le Monde, jeudi 22 janvier 2026
- (9) Marie Jégo « La Russie se réjouit du projet américain d'annexer l'île arctique », Le Monde, 22 janvier 2026
- (10) Remy Ourdan « Les critique de Zelensky contre l'UE, un appel à l'action », Le Monde 25 & 26 janvier 2026
- (11) « La Menace russe », dimanche 17 janvier 2026, France 2 - https://www.franceinfo.fr/replay-magazine/france-2/13h15/13h15-le-dimanche-diplomatie-la-menace-russe-episodes-1-2_7710307.html
- (12) Thomas Snégaroff et David Thomson , « J.D. Vance, la revanche d'une Amérique ». « Le Monde en face », France 5, dimanche 18 janvier 2026 - <https://www.francetelevisions.fr/et-vous/notre-tele/les-programmes-a-ne-pas-rater/jd-vance-la-revanche-dune-amerique-50714>

Newsletter written on Friday, January 30, 2026

Plan International, en Pologne, Roumanie et Moldavie, pour apporter aide matérielle et psychosociale aux jeunes ukrainiens et à leur famille, et [sollicite des dons](https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don) pour ce faire.- <https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don>

L'Aide médicale et caritative France-Ukraine - envoi de convois d'aide humanitaire, des soins aux blessés, des échanges de savoir-faire médical, une aide psychologique et organise des colonies de vacances pour les enfants orphelins - HelloAsso - <https://www.helloasso.com/associations/aide%20medicale%20caritative%20france%20ukraine/collectes/aider-ukraine-amurgence-help-ukraine/don>

Le Comité d'aide médicale Ukraine - réfugiés en transit dans l'ouest du pays, et collecte fonds, médicaments et équipements pour l'hébergement et les soins via ses partenaires français, l'association SAFE et l'organisation FONDEMOS. - <http://www.cam-z.org/en/news/121/>

JeVeuxAider.gouv.fr est la plateforme publique du bénévolat, - une page dédiée Mobilisons-nous pour l'Ukraine .- <https://www.jeveuxaider.gouv.fr/engagement/benevolat-ukraine/>

Les Banques alimentaires - une aide d'urgence à apporter aux frontières de l'Ukraine, dans les pays frontaliers accueillant des réfugiés - <https://www.banquealimentaire.org/urgence-ukraine>

La Protection Civile et l'Association des maires de France ont établi une [liste](#) (lits de camps, sacs de couchage, lingettes, conserves, pansements hémostatiques, solutions antiseptiques ...).

L'Association des maires de France a dressé les [lieux de collecte](#) à travers toute la France. Les Maires de France appellent à la [solidarité avec l'Ukraine](#) . De nombreuses villes de France organisent des collectes de produits de première nécessité - <https://www.amf.asso.fr/documents-les-maires-france-appellent-la-solidarite-avec-lukraine/41122>

La plateforme officielle « *Je m'engage pour l'Ukraine* » lancée le 8 mars 2022 par le gouvernement pour accompagner les Français souhaitant héberger chez eux des Ukrainiens réfugiés et accueillis en France.- <https://parrainage.refugies.info/>

Les associations, fondations, entreprises et collectivités territoriales peuvent utiliser ce [formulaire en ligne](#) pour renseigner leur capacité d'hébergement.- <https://www.demarches-simplifiees.fr/commencer/hebergement-personne-morale-ukraine>

Bibliothèque sans frontière (BSF) - Depuis le début de l'offensive russe en Ukraine, BSF se mobilise et déploie, partout en Europe, des solutions d'urgence pour l'accueil et l'intégration des populations réfugiées. « Bonjour France » est une application pour smartphone innovante et totalement gratuite, qui propose un apprentissage accéléré du français depuis l'ukrainien, disponible depuis le 19 octobre 2022.

<https://www.bibliosansfrontieres.org/2022/10/14/bsf-lance-bonjour-france-une-application-innovante-dapprentissage-du-francais-pour-les-refugies-ukrainiens/>

La mission catholique de l'Eglise polonaise en France suggère également le lien suivant : <https://mission-catholique-polonaise.pl/polska-we-francji/pere-brzys-la-mcp-lance-une-initiative-nationale-pour-aider-lukraine/> - **Source** : conférence des évêques de France